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Press Release

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Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee Recommends Maryland Legislative Redistricting Plan

Public Hearing to be Held on December 22nd at 10:00 a.m.

ANNAPOLIS – The Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee (GRAC) [released today its unanimous recommendations for Maryland's state legislative district boundary lines](#). The Governor and the Committee invite the public to comment on the recommendations during a public hearing scheduled for Thursday, December 22, 2011 at 10:00 a.m. in the Joint Hearing Room, Legislative Services Building, in Annapolis, Maryland.

The [map](#) recommended by GRAC directly reflects the demographics of the State, the population trends that have occurred over the past decade, and the extensive public comments that the Committee heard from hundreds of Marylanders in 12 public hearings across the State, and in written comments.

"Throughout this process, the Governor's Redistricting Advisory Committee made an extraordinary effort to take into account the many concerns and comments from experts and citizens from across Maryland," said Secretary Jeanne Hitchcock. "As chair of the Committee, I believe the map we are submitting to the Governor accurately reflects the population shifts and the diversity of Maryland."

"This map is a fair and balanced proposal," said Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr. "The Commission faced the very difficult task of taking into account the many recommendations we heard from counties, towns, communities and local elected officials and we did our very best to address their concerns while also remaining in full compliance with federal and State law."

"The Committee has worked diligently to create a fair map that incorporates the public testimony, adheres to the Voting Rights Act, adjusts for population and demographic shifts and respects county and municipal boundaries," said Speaker Michael E. Busch. "I am confident this map reflects the changing face of Maryland and ensures every Marylander will have a voice in Annapolis."

GRAC began its work based on the current legislative district map, drawn by the Maryland Court of Appeals in 2002. The Committee was guided by State and federal Constitutional and legal provisions, and has produced a product that enhances minority voting rights, pays exceptional attention to respecting natural and political boundaries, and results in districts that are compact, contiguous, and protect communities.

Specifically:

- The GRAC map has 12 districts that are majority African American – an increase from the 10 districts that the Court of Appeals drew in 2002. This reflects the growth in African American

population in the State, and provides a much stronger voice for the African American community. These districts are 10, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 40, 41, 43, 44, 45, 47.

- In addition to the 12 majority African American districts, the map has 4 districts (20, 21, 28, 39) that are majority minority.
- For the first time in Maryland's history, GRAC recommends the creation of a single-member Hispanic district in Prince George's County, District 47B, which is over 63% Hispanic. In addition, the Committee proposes as an option for public comment the creation of a 50% Hispanic single-member district in Montgomery County (18A). While this recognizes the increased Hispanic population in Montgomery County, the Committee has concerns about the ability of the sub-district to elect a Hispanic candidate and, equally importantly, the impact of the creation of the sub-district on the remainder of the district (18B), which would be 68% white. This option can be found here Planning.Maryland.gov/Redistricting.
- The GRAC map reduces to 13 the number of county crossings, from 14 in the map drawn by the Court of Appeals in 2002. In order to preserve African American voting strength, GRAC recommends drawing District 44 as a district that consists of a single-member district in Baltimore City, and a double-member district in Baltimore County. GRAC also went to great lengths to respect municipal boundaries, and did not recommend any new splits of municipalities.

GRAC's recommendations treat all regions of the State, and both political parties, fairly.

GRAC's recommendations were well informed by the public testimony that we received across the State. The recommended map reflects what we heard from people across the State, as evidenced by the following examples:

- Communities across the State were united into a district, such as Pikesville, Montgomery Village, Aberdeen, and Camp Springs. The Maryland City area of Anne Arundel County was included in District 32, a northwest Anne Arundel district, significantly enhancing the minority vote in that region. And one of the crossings in the map was done specifically to keep Mt. Airy, a municipality that is in Carroll and Frederick Counties, together.
- Carroll County will have a Senate district that is wholly in the County, District 5.
- By eliminating many crossings in Western Maryland, the Committee was able to eliminate several sub-districts, while preserving sub-districts that recognize large incorporated areas, such as Frederick and Hagerstown.
- On the Eastern Shore, Caroline County has sufficient population in District 36 to compete for a Delegate from Caroline.
- The significant African American community in Harford County's District 34A has been kept together.
- District 44 encompasses African American communities in the Baltimore region, recognizing the population trends that have occurred over the past decade and preserving African American representation.

GRAC is pleased to present these recommendations, and looks forward to hearing public comment on the proposal. The recommended map clearly complies with the letter and spirit of federal and State Constitutional and legal provisions.

GRAC was created on July 4, 2011 by Governor Martin O'Malley. The Honorable Jeanne Hitchcock served as Chair, and Senate President Thomas V. Mike Miller, Jr., House Speaker Michael E. Busch, The Honorable James J. King, and Richard Stewart served on the Committee.

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